REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication in the Office Action of allowable subject matter in claims 2, 4, 6, and 8.

Claims 1 and 3-8 have been amended to better define the subject matter Applicants regard as the invention. These amendments were for reasons not related to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto. Support for the amendments is provided by the original claims.

Claims 1, 3, 5, and 7 were rejected, under 35 USC §103(a), as being unpatentable over Choma (US 4,693,226). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Choma fails to suggest the feature recited in claim 1 of an EGR gas outlet port located in the lowest portion of an EGR gas passage that is formed in plates interposed between a cylinder head and an intake manifold. By contrast to this feature, Choma teaches the following with respect to Fig. 3.

The end of an air/gas flow passage 48, adjacent a cylinder head, defines a sleeve portion 50 located within and spaced from an annular outer wall portion 52. A tubular like chamber 56 between inner and outer walls 52 and 50 provides EGR flow

distribution passages 56 surrounding each of intake passages 48. Sleeve portion 50 is provided with spaced openings 58 of a controlled size to permit communication of the EGR gases in passages 56 to air/gas intake flow passages 48 and therefrom to the engine combustion chambers.

An annotated copy of Choma's Fig. 3 is attached as Exhibit 1. As may be seen by inspection of Exhibit 1, Choma's gas outlet port 58 and 58' is not located in the lowest portion of the EGR gas passage chamber 56. As a result, condensed water in the gas may collect in the lowest portions of chamber 56, as indicated in Exhibit 1.

The claimed invention is characterized in that the EGR gas outlet port is provided in the lowest portion of the EGR gas passage. With this structure, the water content in the EGR gas can be certainly discharged into the intake passage. Thereby, it is possible to prevent the plates forming the EGR gas passage from corroding due to water collecting in the EGR gas passage.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Choma does not teach or suggest the subject matter defined by claim 1. Therefore, allowance of claim 1 and all claims dependent therefrom is warranted.

Claim 3 recites that the bottom surface of the EGR gas passage is sloped so as to be inclined downward on the side of

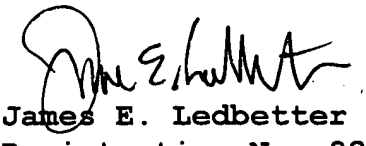
the EGR gas outlet port, in fore and aft directions of the plates, as shown in Figs. 7B and 7C. As a result, even if the engine is mounted in the automobile in an inclined manner, the EGR gas outlet port is the lowest portion of the EGR gas passage due to the sloped bottom surface. As a result, the water in the gas does not remain in the gas passage, but is discharged into the intake passage.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Choma does not disclose or suggest the features defined by claim 3. Therefore, allowance of claim 3 and its dependent claim 7 is warranted for this independent reason.

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

If any issues remain which may best be resolved through a telephone communication, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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